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Address

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Arab Republic of Egypt

Menofia - Shiben El-Kom - Postal Code: 32111 - P.O Box: 66

Mobile: +201141514157

Fax: +20482310073

Tel : +2237620818

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Arab Republic of Egypt,
Giza, Dokki, Ben Elsarayat -1 Mohamed Al Zoghbi St.

Email: ceo@apr.agency - jprr@epra.org.eg

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Phone: (+2) 0114 -15 -14 -157 - (+2) 0114 -15 -14 -151 - (+2) 02-376-20 -818

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Modern Research Trends towards Employing New Media in Public Relations and Public Diplomacy: Second Level Analytical Paper

Emad Almudaifar

emad_9811@hotmail.com

PhD researcher in public relations

College of Mass Communication

Imam Muhammad bin Saud University

Osamh Al-Muhaya

osmuhaya@gmail.com

PhD researcher in public relations

College of Mass Communication

Imam Muhammad bin Saud University

Hani Al-Ghamdi

hnhn2361@gmail.com

PhD researcher in public relations

College of Mass Communication

Imam Muhammad bin Saud University

Ibrahim Al-Rashidi

ee2011r@gmail.com

PhD researcher in public relations

College of Mass Communication

Imam Muhammad bin Saud University

Abstract

This paper aims to identify how the development of information and communication technology reflects on both public relations and international public relations studies, by monitoring, analyzing and comparing the most important research trends, theoretical approaches and methodological frameworks for a sample of digital public relations research, and public diplomacy in the new media era.

This paper is an analytical description, following the qualitative and quantitative methodology as needed, in which researchers used the second-level analysis (Meta analysis) to reach a series of results, most notably that the sample of Arab studies in the field of digital public relations seemed somewhat fragmented; the majority of were descriptive studies, the depths of the phenomenon have not been explored in depth, or in terms of the dispersion of the theories and approaches despite the similarities in the variables studied by that research, or even the weakness of some of them in the use of theories applied in the analysis of phenomena, as well as the disappearance of the theory from another.

While the sample of studies in the field of public diplomacy has been characterized by entrenched, coherent, and knowledge accumulation, development in information and communication technology has confused practice itself, not the structure of scientific studies, and scientists see it as a positive confusion, that drives toward the need to develop practice with a greater chance of success if foreign public interests, culture, and perspectives are taken into considerations, consistent with theories: excellence and dialog, in addition to the forth model of Grunig.

However, the researchers noted that the sample of public diplomacy studies was immersed in the obsession with studying the practice and application of



public diplomacy, focusing on criticized and developed the practice rather than studying of the masses and the means. Most of public diplomacy studies in the sample used content analysis, in quantitative studies, or in qualitative studies. The public diplomacy still lacked its own theoretical frameworks, but because of its close to strategic political communication and its interest in the study of the communicative; They use the "Agenda setting" and "framing" theories and their combination as a theoretical input have been the most common. Also there was a significant use of Four models of public relations of the use of the four models of Grunig, mainly the two-way asymmetrical and symmetrical models, excellence theory, and the theory of dialog in many public diplomacy studies, owing to the emphasis that public diplomacy should be viewed as international public relations, and that public relations theories have been scientifically proven to be used in public diplomacy.

Key words: New Media - Public Relations - Public Diplomacy - Meta analysis.